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## The Image of Central Florida as a Vacation Destination

Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies

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# The Image of Central Florida as a Vacation Destination

by:  
Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies  
University of Central Florida

January 1991

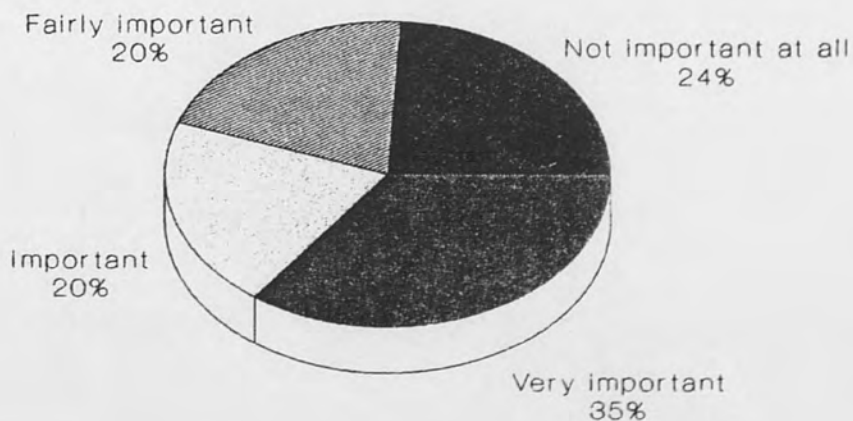
## Methodology

- Sample universe: fourteen SMSAs in seven states that generated the highest number of tourists to Florida in 1989.
- Interviews were conducted in two SMSAs in each of the following states: CA, GA, MI, NY, OH, PA, and TX.
- Screening: all respondents must have taken at least one VACATION trip during the past two years outside their home state.
- Sample: 750 households.
- Instrument: structured telephone questionnaire with a few open-ended questions.
- Response rate: 69.6%

## Respondents' Vacation Travel Behavior

- Respondents have taken an average of 7.2 and a median of 5 trips outside their home state in the past five years.
- 86% of those trips were in the continental U.S.
- Respondents usually spent an average of 9.9 days and a median of 7 days on their out-of-state vacation trips.
- They usually took their vacation in any season (45.6%) or in the summer (31.8%)
- The majority of the respondents usually begin planning their vacation trips 1-3 months (53.8%) prior to their departure.
- The male and female equally (41.1%) usually choose the vacation destination. In some households, the female is the major decision maker of destination choice (23.9%)

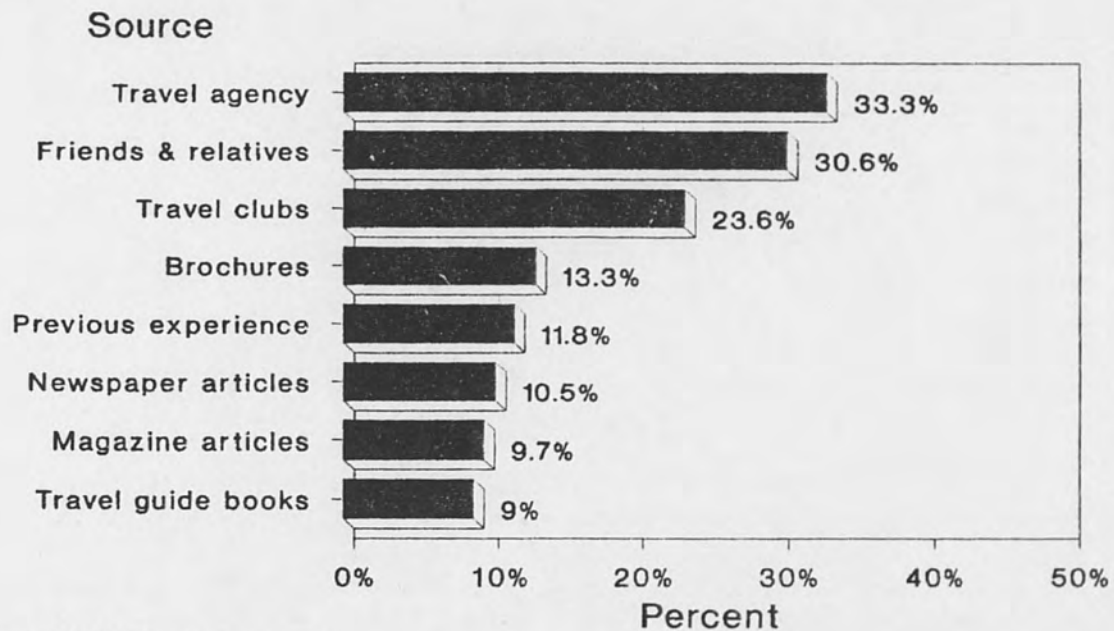
## Impact of Children on Vacation Destination Choice



Note: "How important are children in deciding where to go on vacation?"

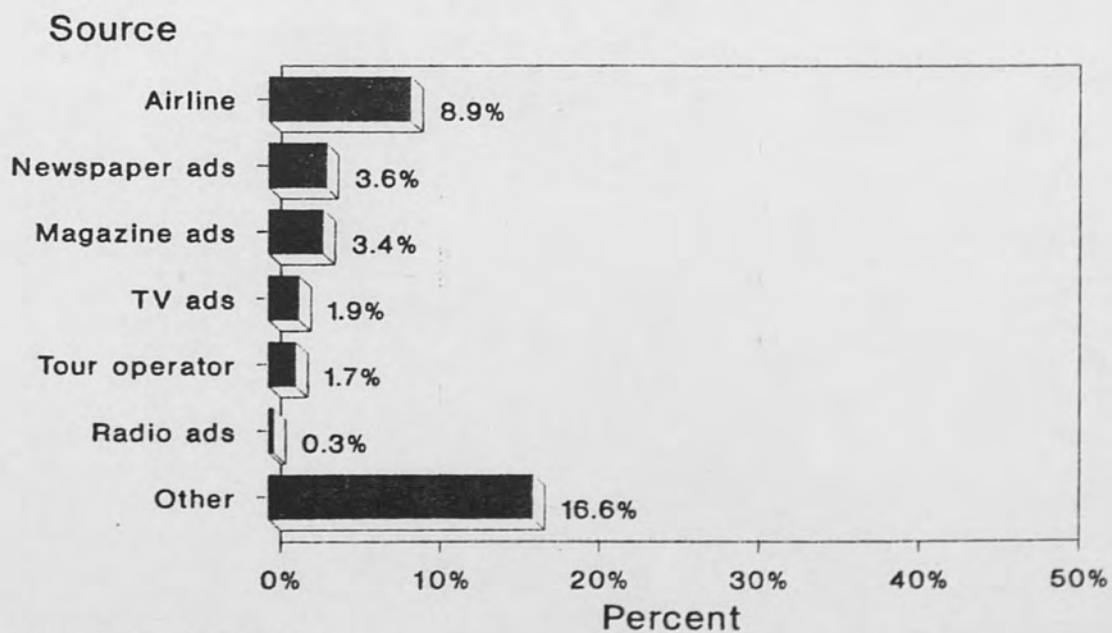
33% of households had children; Median=2

## Sources of Information Used for Planning Out-of-State Vacation



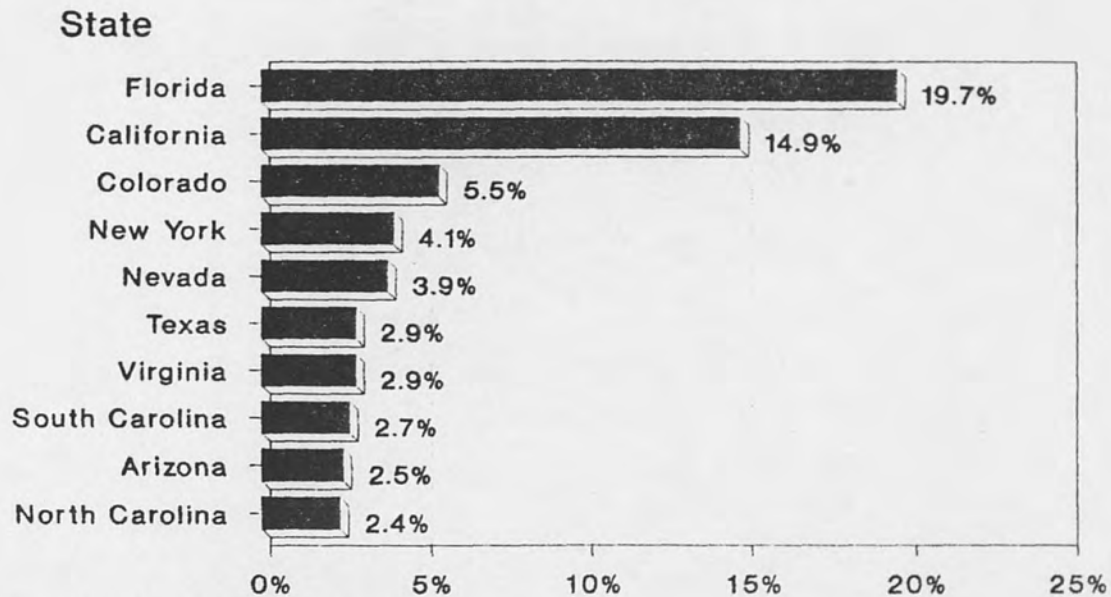
Note: Multiple responses

## Sources of Information Used for Planning Out-of-State Vacation (cont'd)



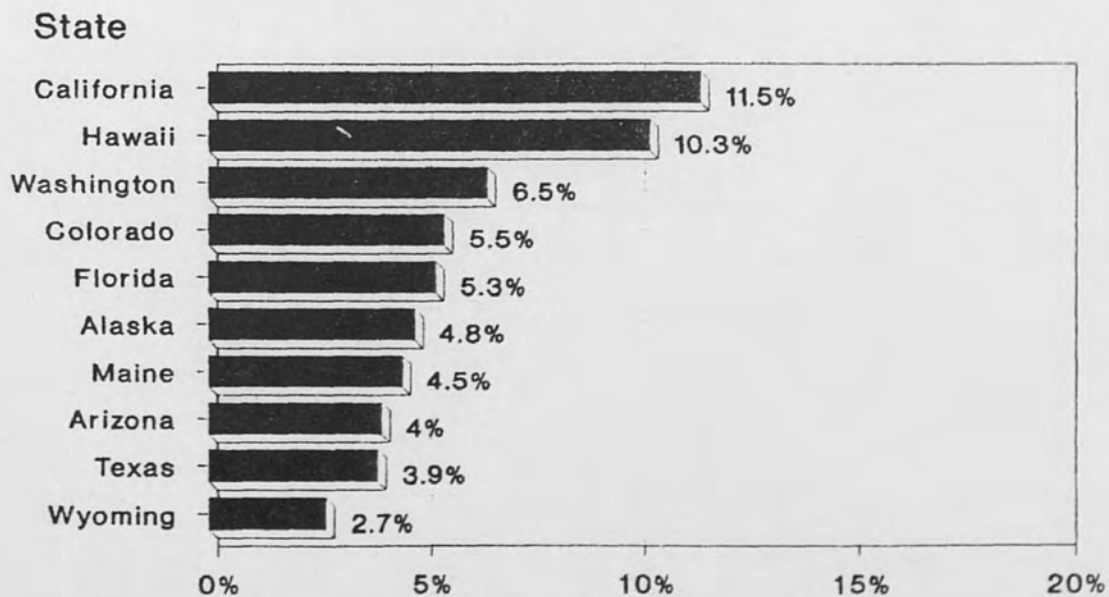
Note: Multiple responses

## State Which Respondents Would Most Like to Revisit



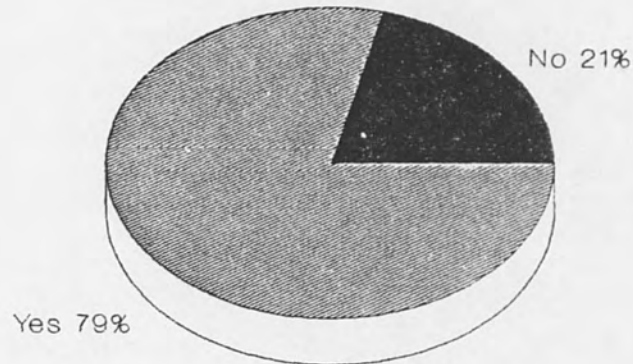
Note: "Which state would you most like to visit again in the future?"

## State Which Respondents Would Like to Visit for the First Time



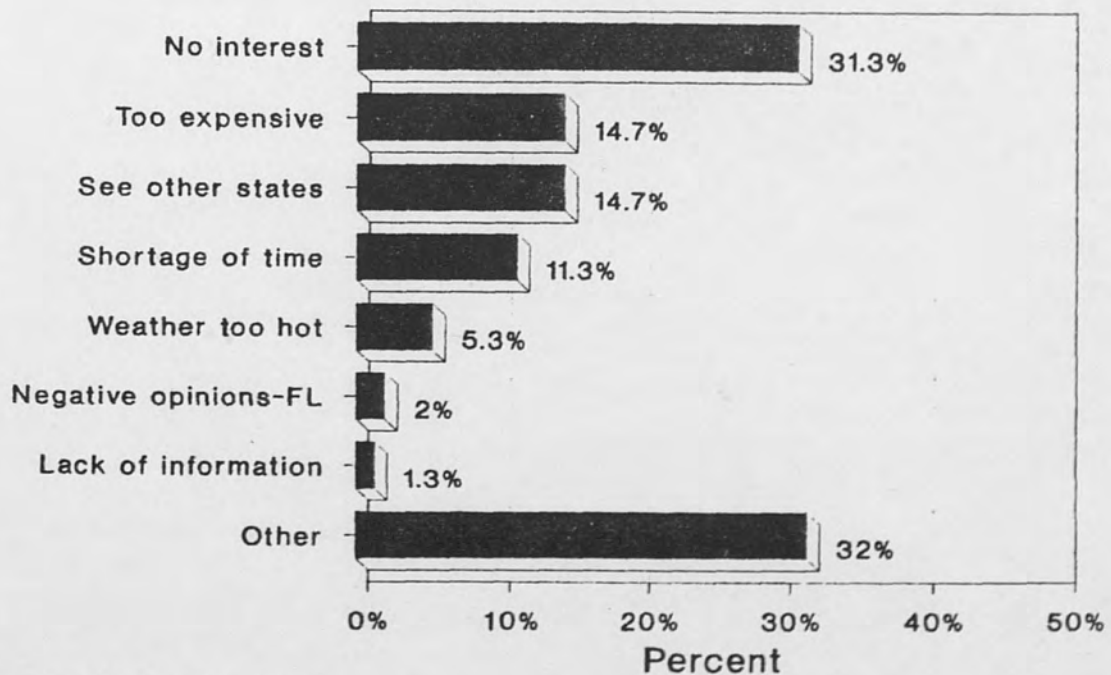
Note: "Which state that you have never visited would you like to visit?"

## Visiting Experience to Florida



Note: "Have you ever visited Florida?"

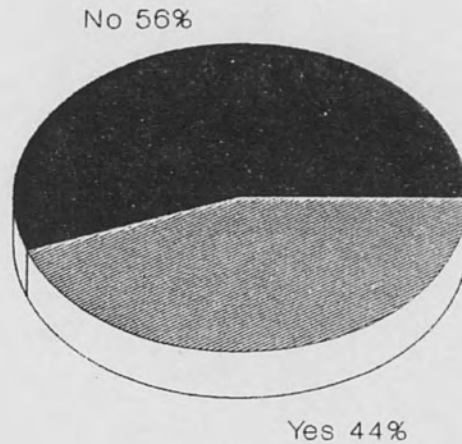
## Why didn't you Visit Florida?



Note: Multiple responses



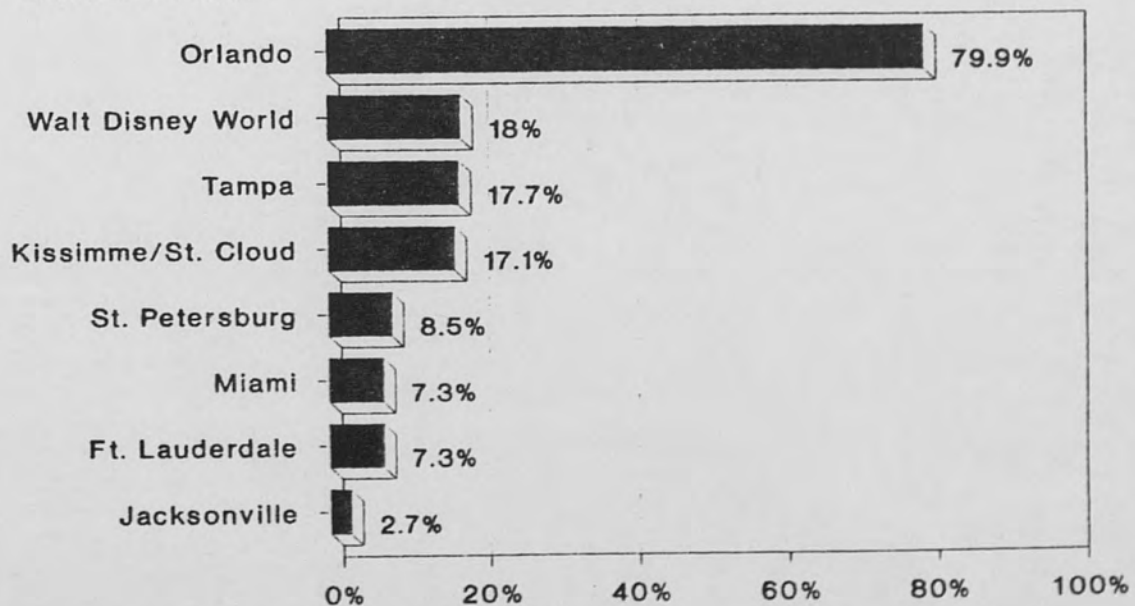
## Familiarity with Central Florida



Note: "Have you heard of a tourist destination called Central Florida?"

## Cities/Towns Affiliated with Central FL

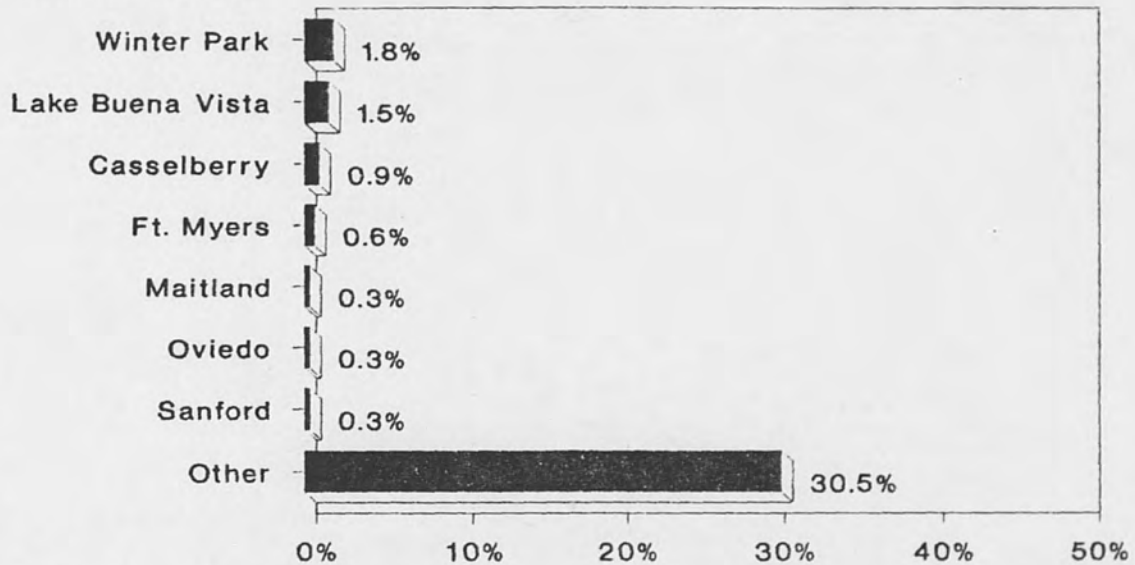
### Cities/Towns



Note: "Which cities or towns does Central Florida comprise of?"

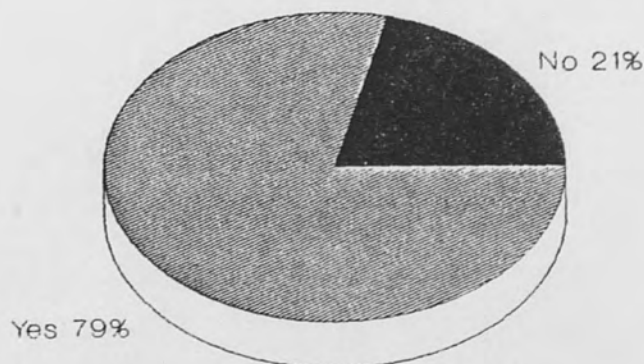
## Cities/Towns Affiliated with Central FL (Continued)

### Cities/Towns



Note: "Which cities or towns does Central Florida comprise of?"

## Visiting Experience to Central Florida (Respondents who heard of CrI FL)

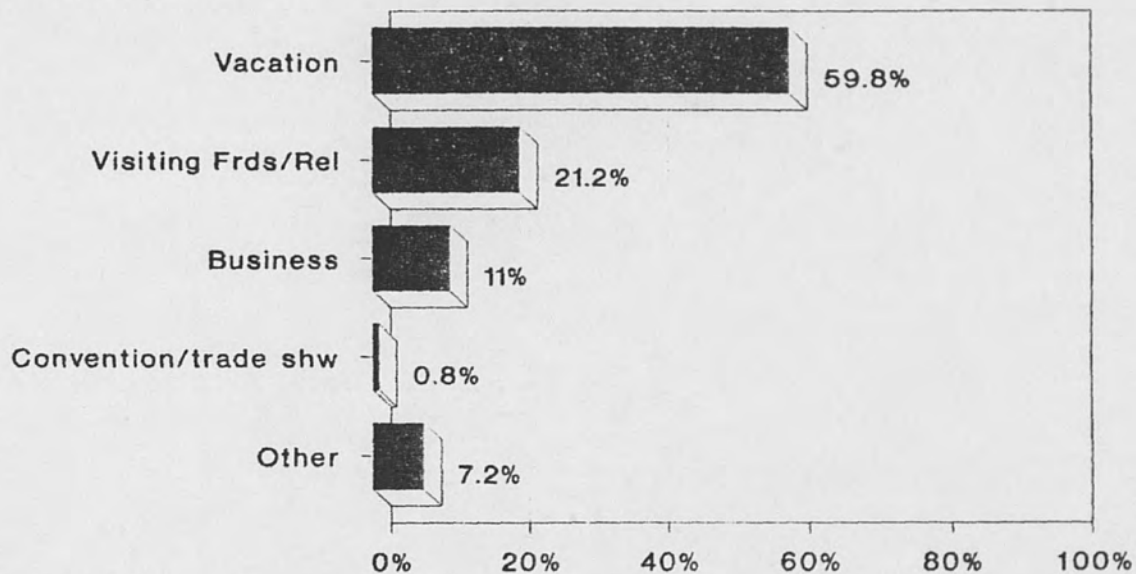


Note: "Have you ever visited Central Florida?"  
N=335



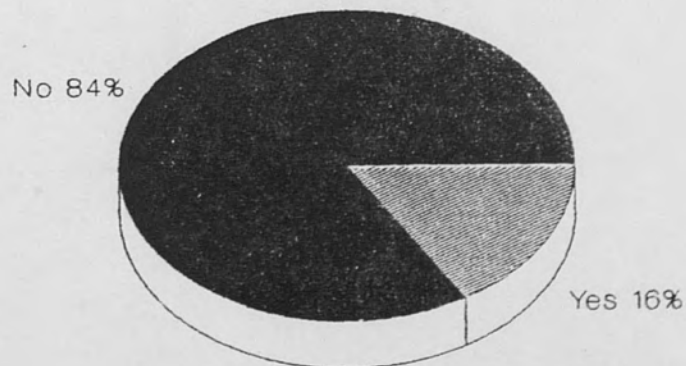
## Main Purpose of most Recent Visit to Central Florida

Purpose of visit



Note: N=264

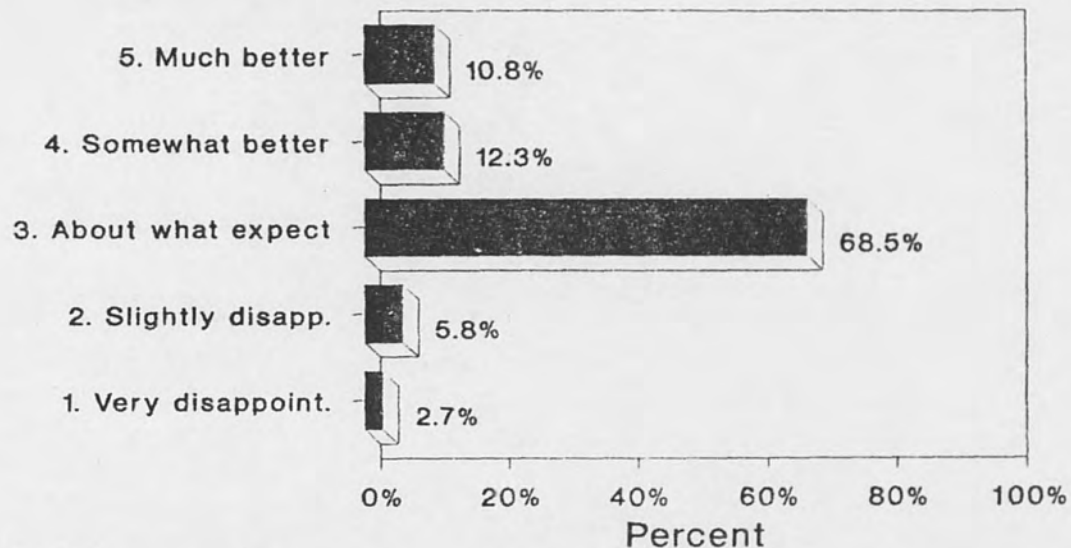
## Did Central Florida Trip involve a Package Tour?



Note: N=263

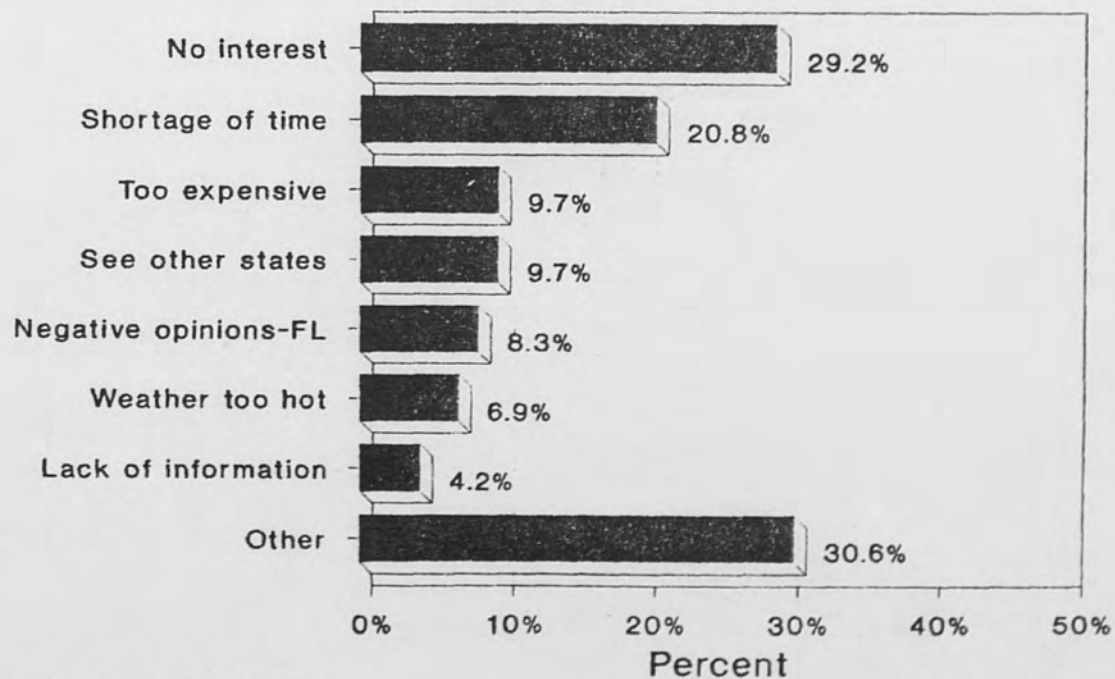
## Compared to Expectations, Central Florida Visit was...

### Level of expectation



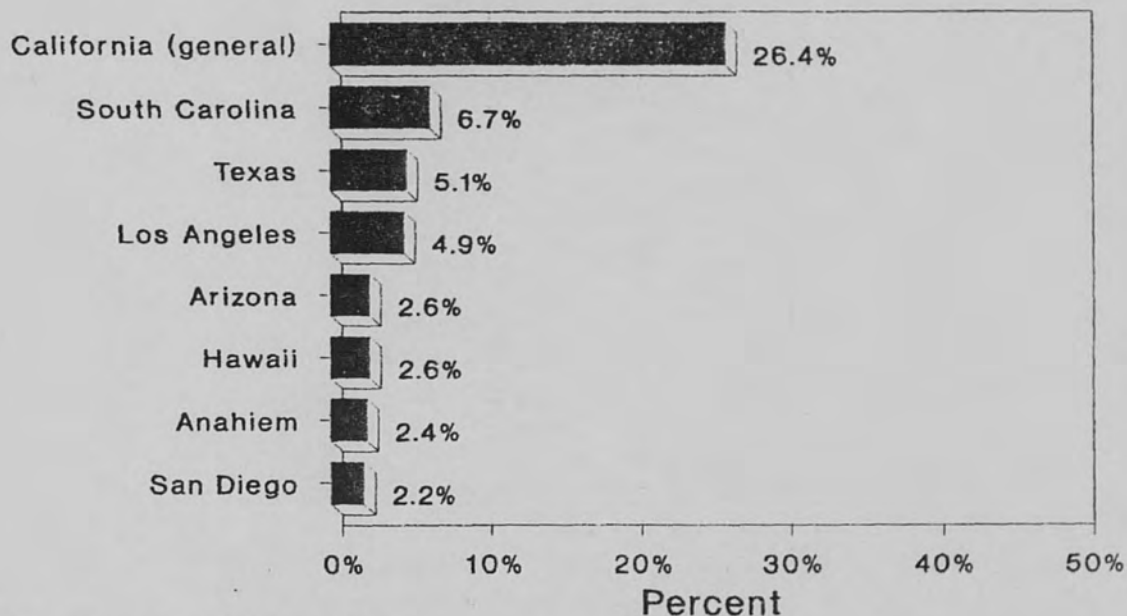
Note: N=260  
Mean=3.2 Median=3.0

## "Why didn't you Visit Central Florida?"



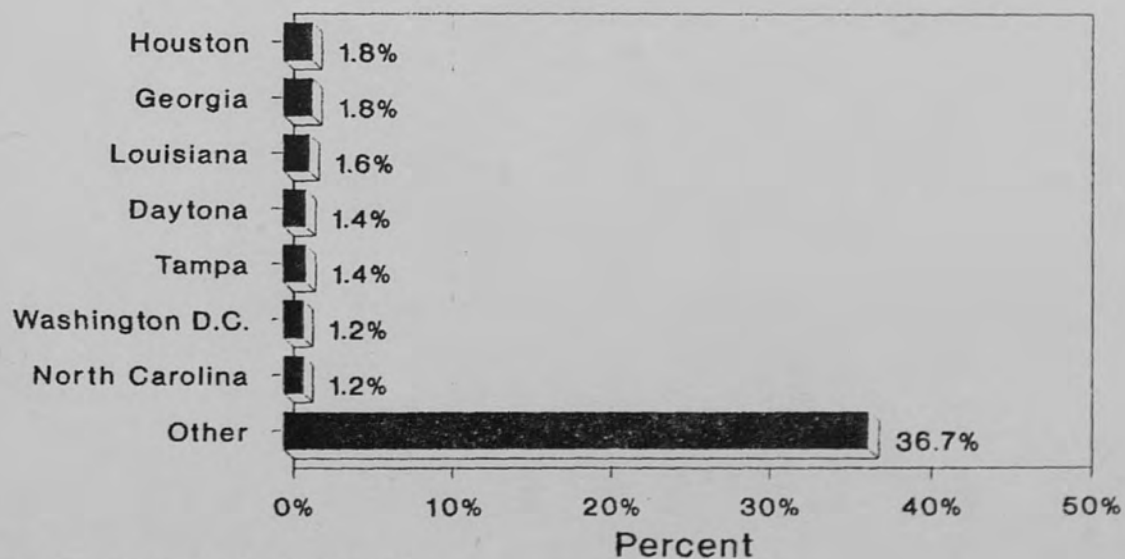
Note: Multiple responses

## Other Destinations that were Perceived to be Similar to Central Florida



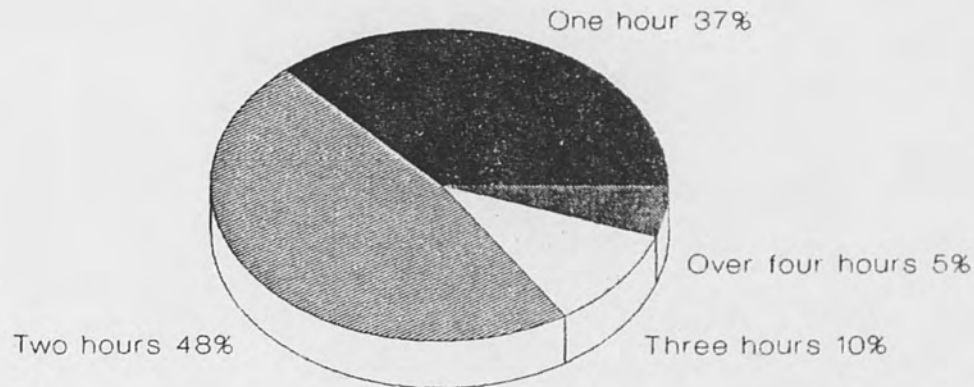
Note: an open-ended question

## Other Destinations that were Perceived to be Similar to Central Florida (continued)



Note: an open-ended question

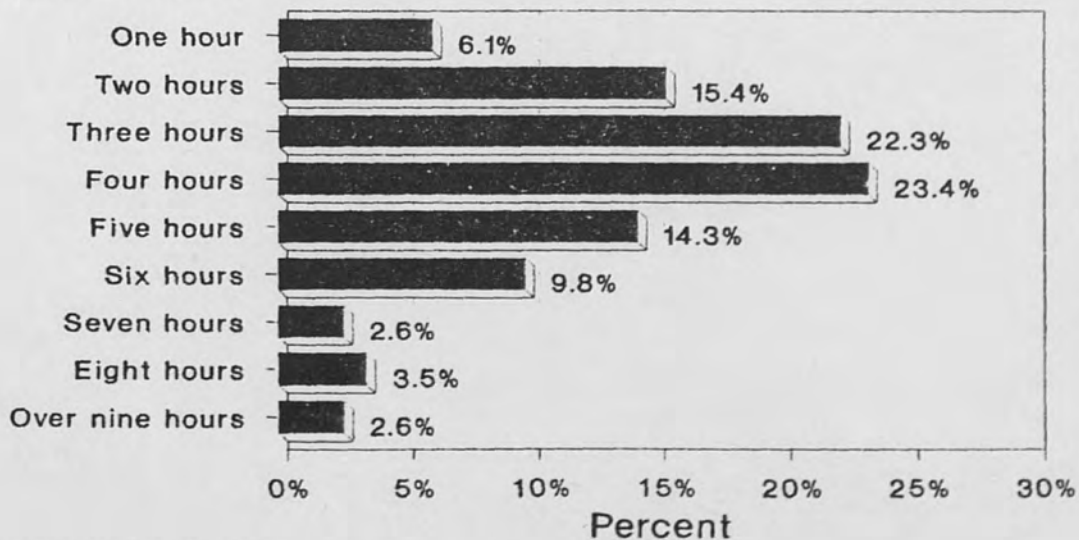
## How Long does it take to Drive from Central Florida to the Closest Beach?



Note: 22.4% did not know  
Median= two hours

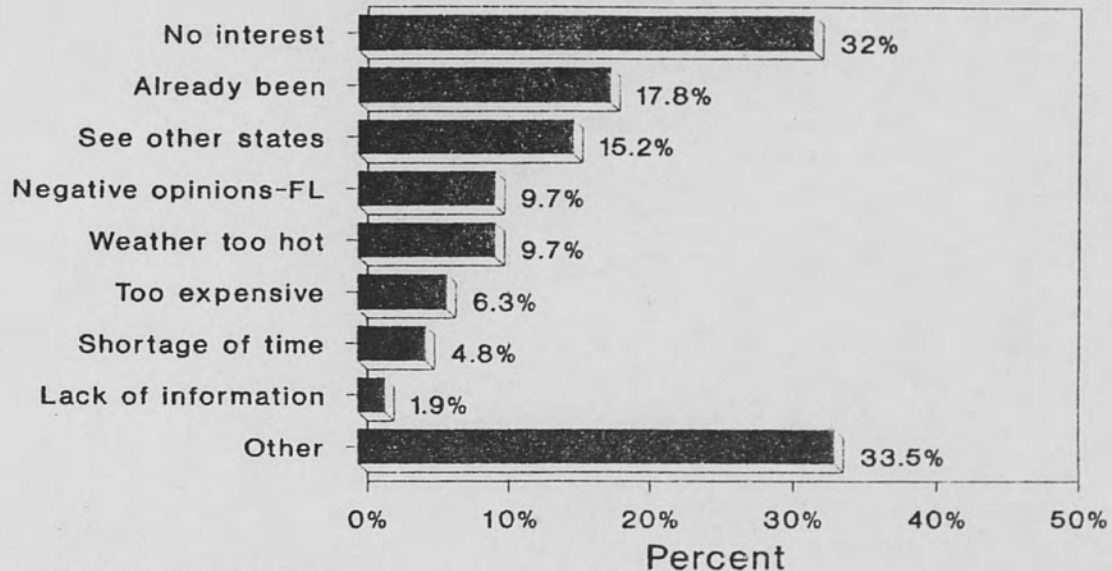
## How long does it take to Drive from Central Florida to Miami?

Length of drive



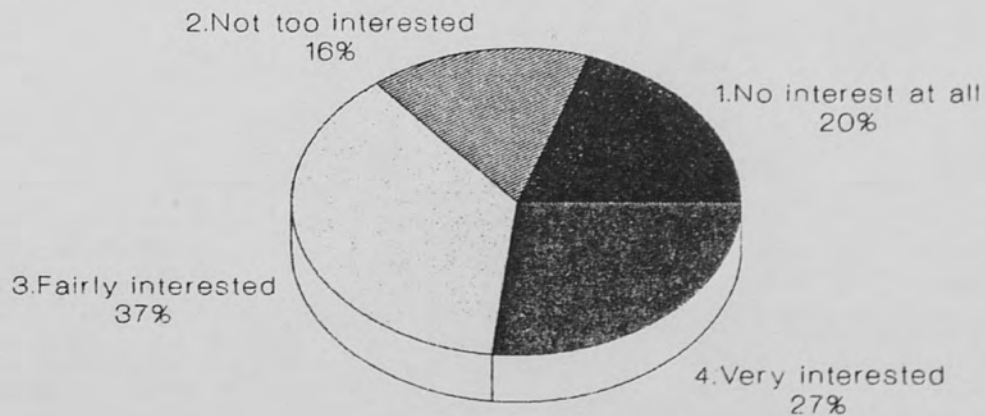
Note: 27.9% did not know  
Median= four hours

## Why wouldn't you be Interested in Visiting Central Florida?



Note: Multiple responses  
N=269

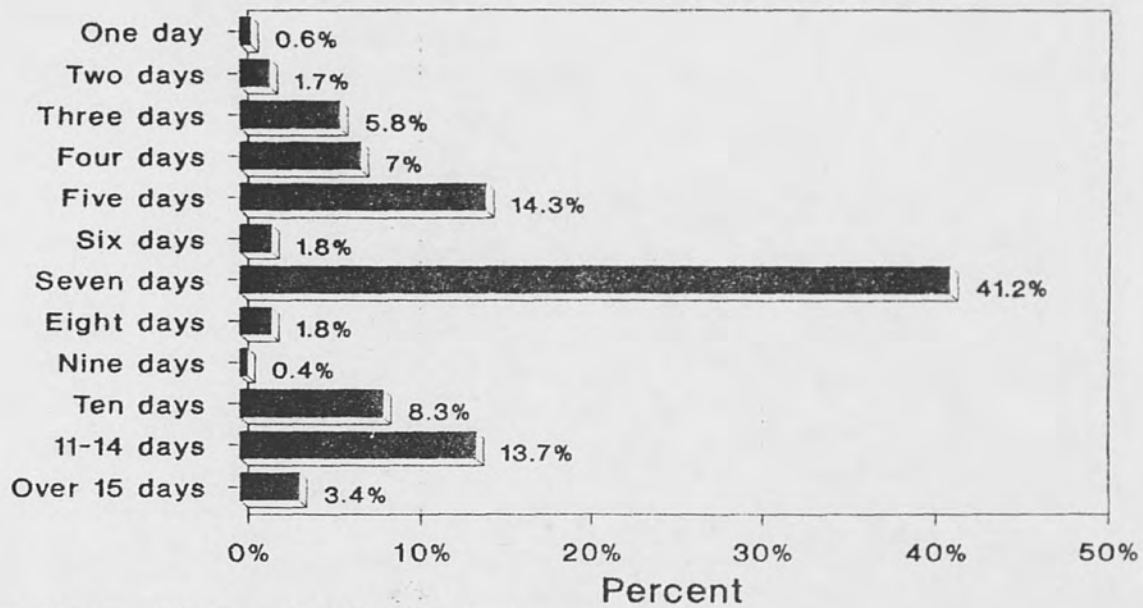
## Level of Interest to go to Central Florida in the next Two years



Mean=2.7 Median=3.0



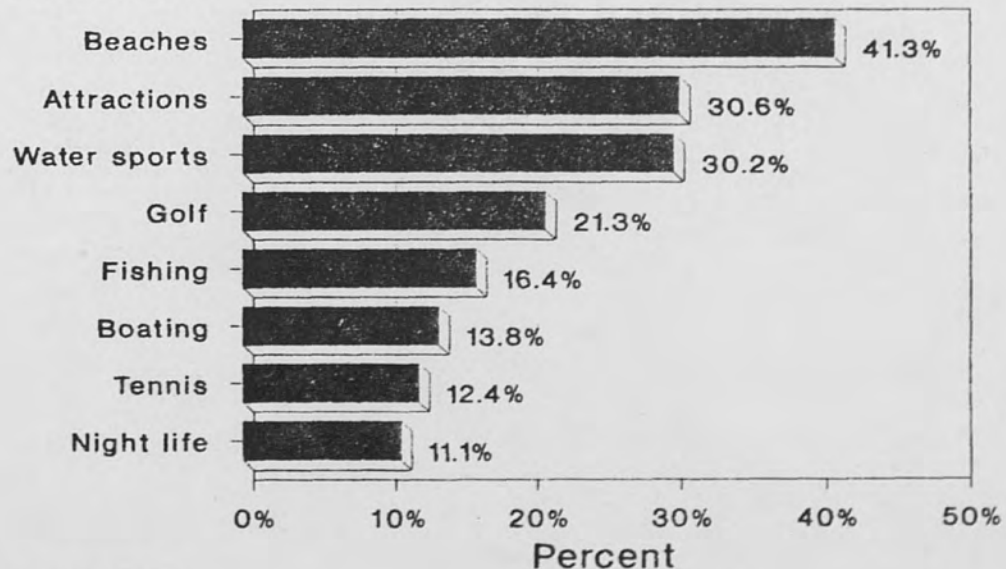
## How many Days should the Average Central Florida Vacation last?



Note: Mean=8.0 days; Median= 7 days

## Type of Activities Available to Central Florida Tourists

### Type of activities

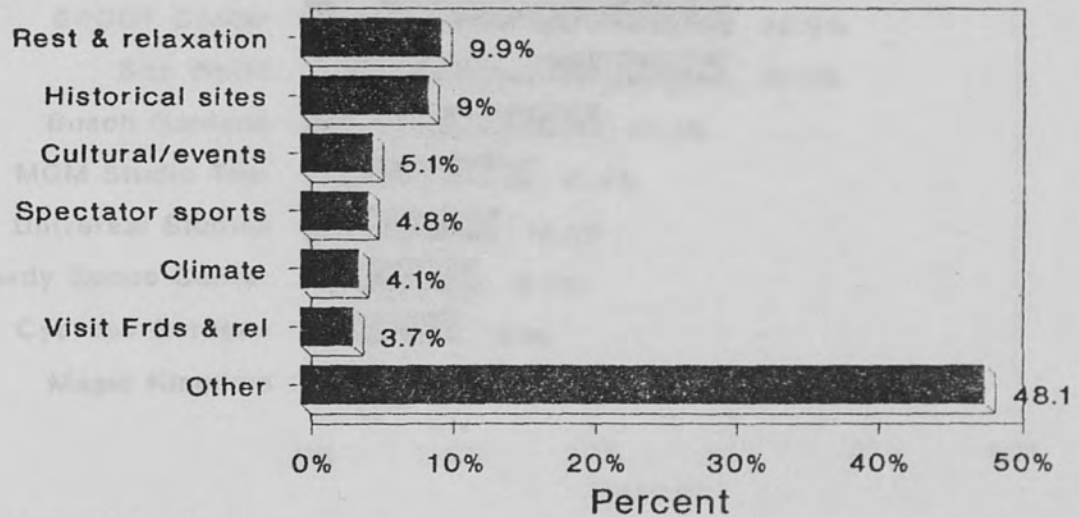


Note: Multiple responses



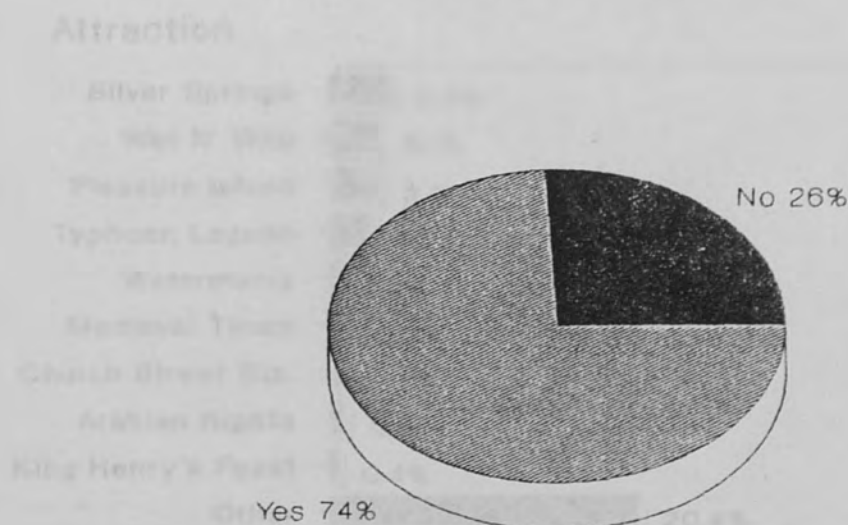
## Type of Activities Available to Central Florida Tourists (continued)

### Type of activities



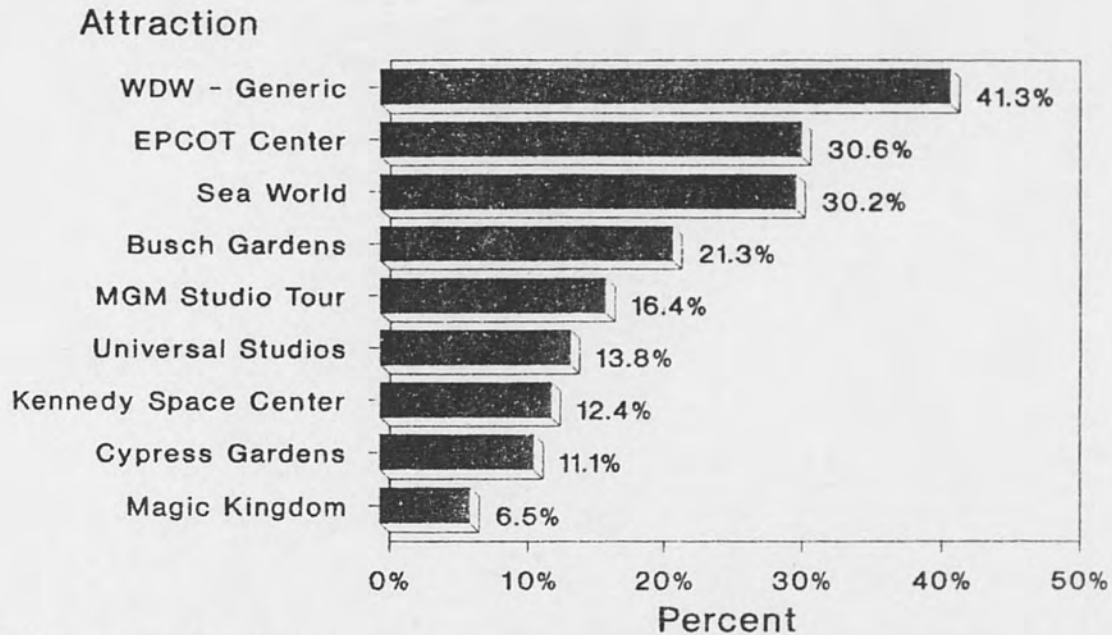
Note: Multiple responses

## Familiarity with Central Florida Attractions



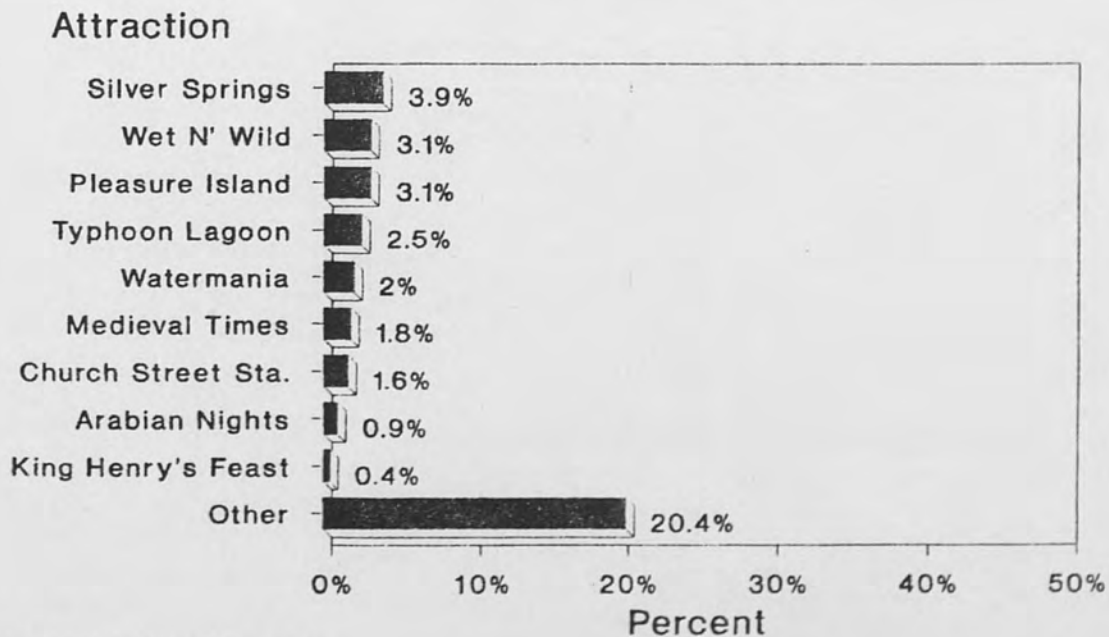
Note: Multiple responses

## Familiarity with Specific Central Florida Attractions



Note: Multiple responses

## Familiarity with Specific Central Florida Attractions



Note: Multiple responses

## Perceptions of Central Florida

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Central Floridians are hospitable toward tourists	3.6
Vacationing in Central Florida is a good value for money	3.4
All you hear about Central FL is Disney attractions	3.4
Prices of Central Florida attractions are reasonable	3.1
FL is very similar to other sunny destinations (CA, TX, LA)	3.1

Scale: 1=disagree strongly<----->5=agree strongly

## Perceptions of Central Florida (continued)

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Central Florida offers great shopping bargains	3.0
With the exception of a few attractions, CrI FL is rural	2.8
Orlando airport is small	2.7
The scenery in Florida is not diversified	2.7
The weather in Central Florida is too hot year-round	2.4

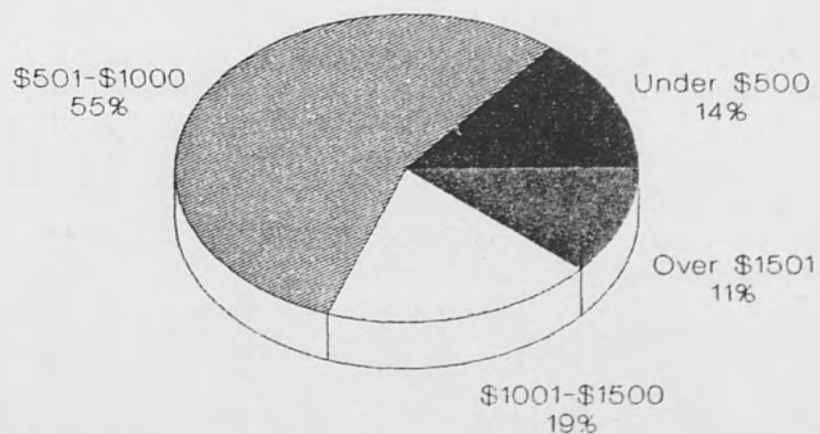
Scale: 1=disagree strongly<----->5=agree strongly

## Perceptions of Central Florida (continued)

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Central FL is a destination for families only	2.3
There are not many hotels in Central Florida	2.1
There is not a lot of info available about Central Florida vacation opportunities	2.6
CrI FL is an unsafe destination	2.1

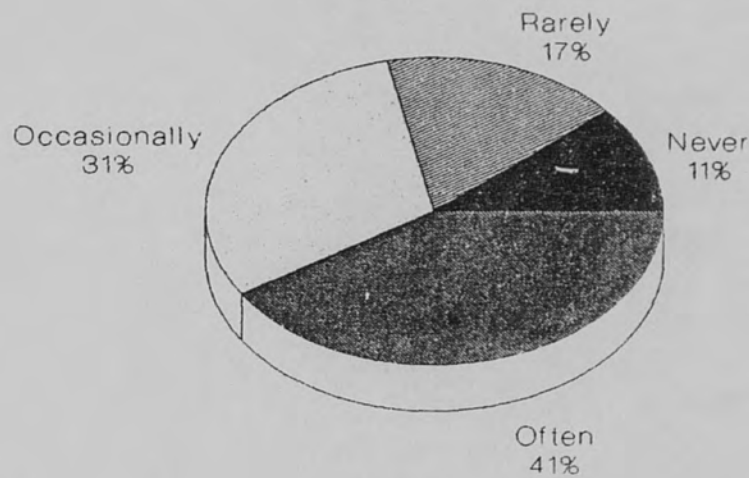
Scale: 1=disagree strongly<----->5=agree strongly

## Perceived Price of a One-Week CrI FL Vacation (all inclusive, per person)



Note: Mean= \$1079 SD= \$702  
Median= \$1000  
20% of the respondents didn't know

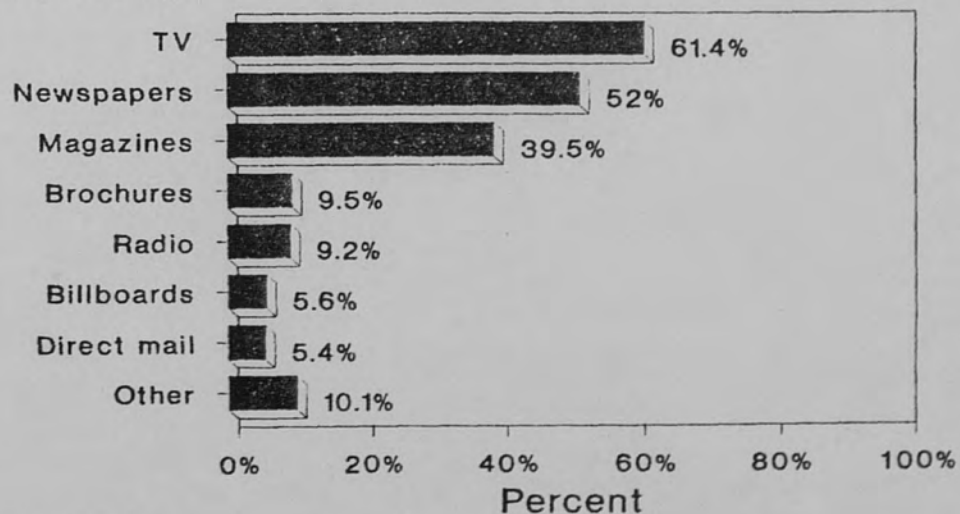
## Exposure to Advertising about Central Florida



Note: "How often do you see, hear, or read advertising about travel to Central Florida?"

## Type of Advertising Respondents were Exposed to

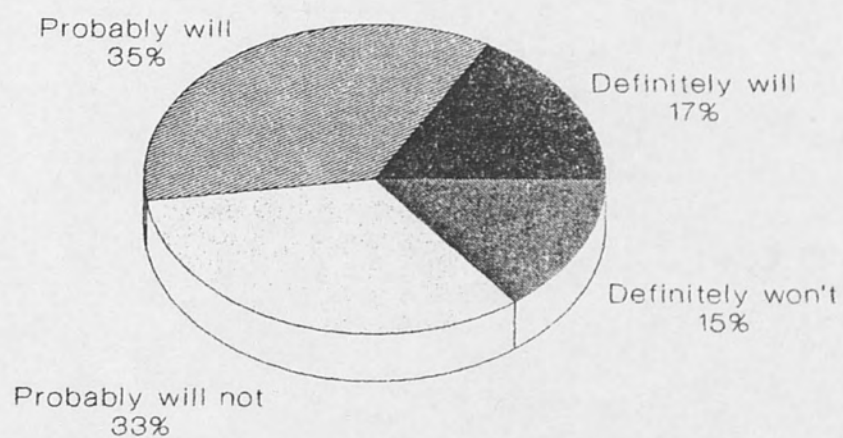
Type of advertising



Note: Multiple responses  
"Where did you see or hear advertising about Central Florida?"



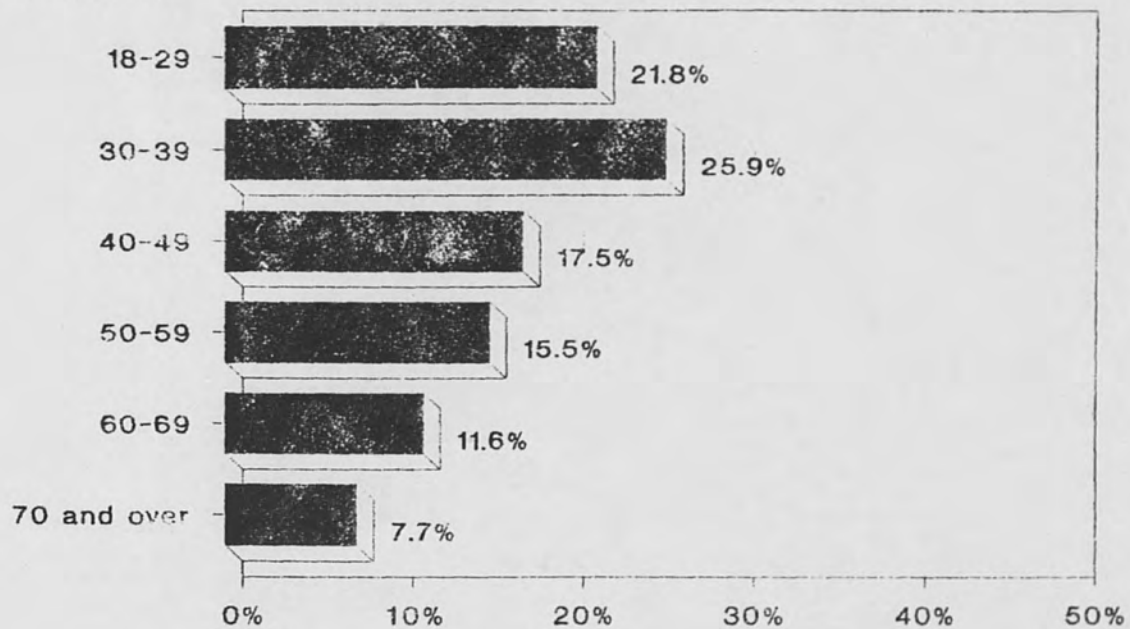
## Level of Likelihood to visit Central Florida in the next Two years



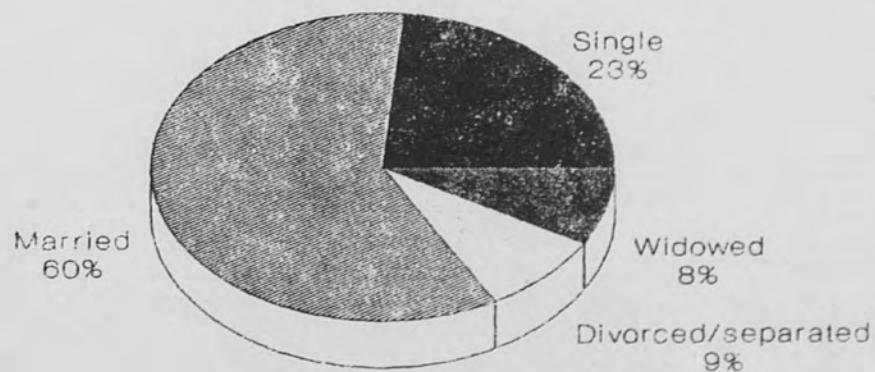


## Age of the Respondents

Age group

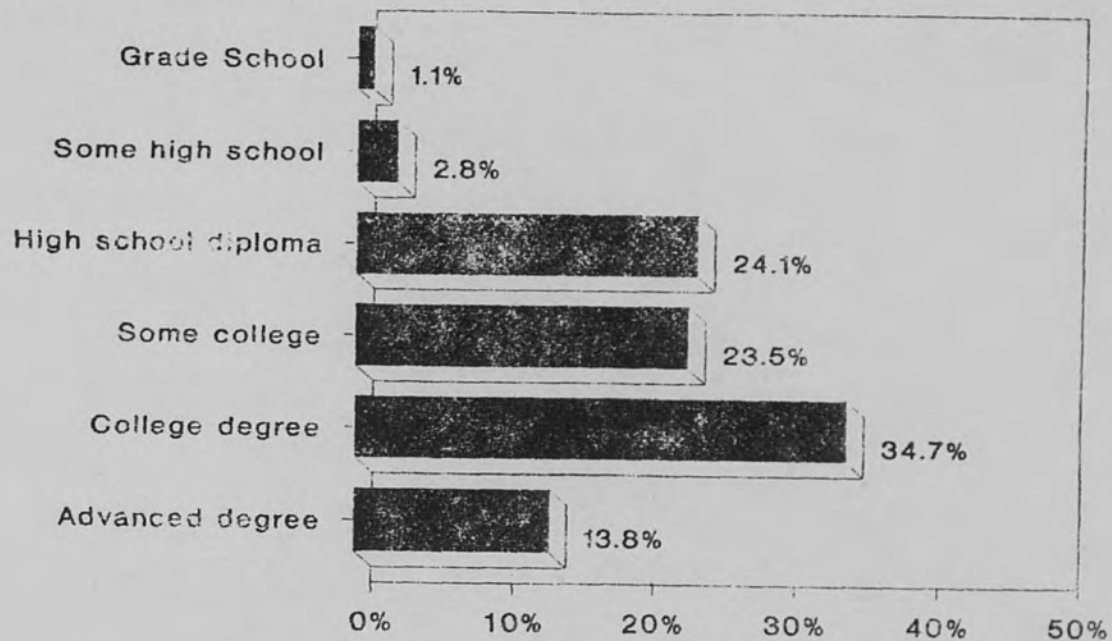


## Marital Status of the Respondent



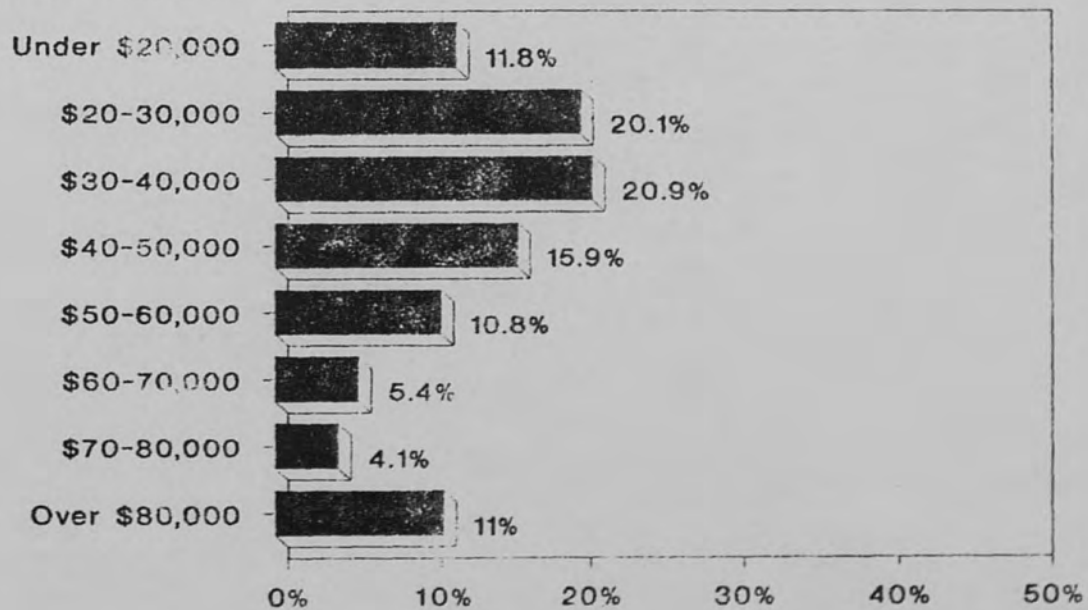
## Respondents' Highest Level of Education

Level of education



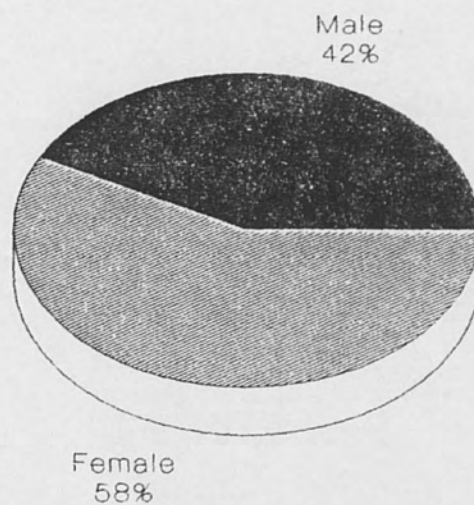
## Respondents' 1990 Household Income

Level of income



16.3% did not answer this question

## Gender of the Respondent



## Who are more Interested in Visiting Central Florida in the Next Two Years?

- Respondents in households where all members participate equally in vacation destination choice (rather than one dominant member).
- Respondents who had children under 18 living in their household.
- Respondents who had previously visited Central Florida.
- Respondents who were familiar with CrI FL attractions.
- Respondents who were often exposed to advertising about Central Florida.
- Female respondents.

## Who are more Likely to Visit Central Florida in the Next Two Years?

- Respondents in households where all members participate equally in vacation destination choice (rather than one dominant member).
- Respondents who had previously visited Florida.
- Respondents who had previously visited Central Florida.
- Respondents who were familiar with CrI FL attractions.
- Respondents who were often exposed to advertising about Central Florida.
- Married respondents.

**Perceptions of Central Florida:**  
**Respondents who had been vs. those who had not**

Respondents who had been to Central Florida:

- Perceived CrI FL scenery to be less diversified.
- Perceived Central Floridians to be more hospitable toward tourists.
- Perceived Central Florida to be a safer destination.
- Perceived that more vacation information is available about CrI FL.
- Were more likely to have seen advertising about CrI FL.

than respondents who had never been to Central Florida

**Perceptions of Central Florida:**  
**Respondents who had been vs. those who had not**

Respondents who had been to Central Florida agreed less with the following statements:

- "All you hear about CrI FL is Disney attractions."
- "CrI FL is a destination for families with children only."

than respondents who had never been to Central Florida



## Perceptions of Central Florida: Respondents who had heard vs. those who had not

Respondents who had heard about Central Florida:

- Perceived Central Floridians to be more hospitable toward tourists.
- Were less likely to agree that "Florida is similar to other sunny destinations like CA, TX, LA, Carolinas."
- Were less likely to agree that "there are not many hotels in Central Florida."
- Were more likely to have seen advertising about CrI FL.

than respondents who had never been to Central Florida

## Predictors of Interest and Likelihood to Visit Central Florida in the next Two Years



# Summary of Findings

- Florida and Central Florida are high repeat-visitation destinations.
- Florida is not a very high first-time visit destination.
- Majority of subjects in states that generate the majority of tourists to Florida, have not heard of Central Florida.
- Those who have heard of Central Florida have also visited it.
- Majority of visitors to Central Florida are vacationers.
- Level of satisfaction with Ctr. Fl. visit was about what the subjects expected.

- Central Florida was perceived to be similar to California.
- The level of INTEREST to go to Ctr. Fl. in the next two years was high (64%).
- Beaches and attractions were perceived to be the most common type of activities available in Ctr. Fl.
- Specific perceptions about Ctr. Fl. and its touristic attractions and facilities were all positive.
- Price perceptions of Ctr. Fl. "typical vacation" were mostly accurate.
- Exposure to advertising about Ctr. Fl. was relatively high.
- The most mentioned advertising media were TV, newspapers and magazines.
- The level of LIKELIHOOD to visit Ctr. Fl. in the next two years was pretty high (52%).

# **Profile of Potential Visitors To Central Florida**

**Previous visitors to Florida**

**Previous visitors to Central Florida**

**People who are familiar with Central  
Florida attractions**

**People who were exposed to  
advertising about Central Florida**

**Married people**

**People with children under 18 in their  
households**

**Females**

**Democratic "vacation decision-makers"**